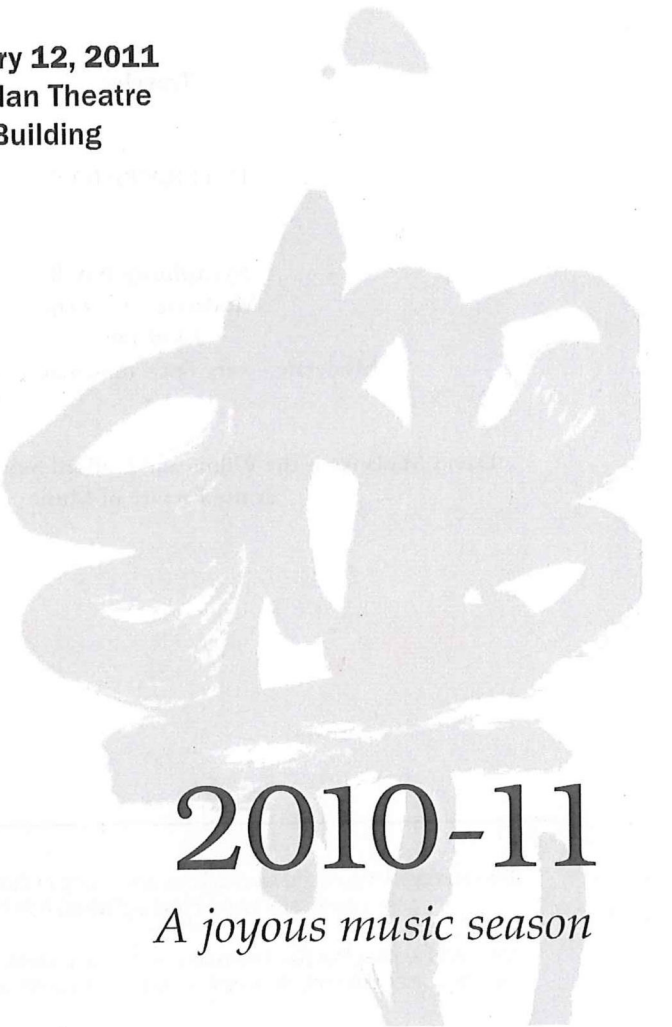
CD 2011--36

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

WIND AND BRASS

University of Toronto Wind Ensemble
Gillian MacKay, conductor

Saturday, February 12, 2011
7:30 p.m. MacMillan Theatre
Edward Johnson Building



2010-11

A joyous music season

University of Toronto Wind Ensemble
Gillian MacKay, conductor

THE MUSIC OF DAVID MASLANKA

Crown of Thorns

University of Toronto Percussion Ensemble
Alejandro Céspedes Pazos, Xiaolong (Bruce) Chi, Dorian Cox,
Greg Harrison, Stefan Otto Wolfgang Kitai, Jose (Rafael) Ponciano,
Jonathan Smith, Edna Teguibon
Beverley Johnston, director

Traveler

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 8
Moderate - very fast
Moderate
Moderate - very fast - moderate - very fast

David Maslanka is the Wilma and Clifford Smith Visitor in Music
at the Faculty of Music

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Program Notes

by David Maslanka

The title ***Crown of Thorns*** is an obvious reference to Christ's "Crown of Thorns", but the name first came to me as a possible title for a piece from seeing a plant called "Crown of Thorns" at the New York Botanical Gardens. This is a rambling, thorny, desert plant from the Middle East, with small, green leaves, and small, very simple and pretty red flowers. The rambling, interweaving, vine-like stems suggested music to me.

As I meditated on the words "crown of thorns," and on the plant, and the idea of a work for keyboard percussion ensemble, the following image arose:

a darkening sky
seven stars are visible:
the seven-starred halo
the golden light
the hands of blessing

The seven-starred halo is the crown of thorns transcended. It is the crown of highest spiritual power arrived at through the greatest depth of suffering. The imagery is Christian, but the experience transcends religion, and is universal. The music is at times sober and reflective, but is, for the most part, filled with the joy and energy of liberation.

Traveler was commissioned in 2003 by the University of Texas at Arlington Band Alumni Association, the Delta Sigma chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi and the Gamma Nu Chapter of Tau Beta Sigma, in honor of the career contributions of Ray C. Lichtenwalter, retiring Director of Bands at UT Arlington. Ray has been a close friend and champion of my music for many years, and it was a great pleasure for me to write this piece for his final concert.

The idea for *Traveler* came from the feeling of a big life movement as I contemplated my friend's retirement. *Traveler* begins with an assertive statement of the chorale melody "Nicht so traurig, nicht so sehr" (Not so sad, not so much). The chorale was not chosen for its title, although in retrospect it seems quite appropriate. The last part of a life need not be sad. It is the accumulation of all that has gone before, and a powerful projection into the future – the potential for a tremendous gift of life and joy. And so the music begins with energy and movement, depicting an engaged life in full stride. At the halfway point, a meditative quiet settles in. Life's battles are largely done; the soul is preparing for its next big step.

In our hearts, our minds, our souls
We travel from life to life to life
In time and eternity.

Symphony No. 8 is in three distinct movements, but the musical layout suggests a single large-scale panoramic vista.

I began the composition process for this symphony with meditation and was shown scenes of widespread devastation. But this music is not about the surface of our world problems. It is a response to a much deeper vital creative flow which is forcefully at work, and which will carry us through our age of crisis. This music is a celebration of life. It is about new life, continuity from the past to the future, great hope, great faith, joy, ecstatic vision, and fierce determination.

I. The old is continually present in the new. The first movement touches the Gloria from my Mass: *Glory to God in the highest, whatever that may mean to you: the power of the universe made manifest to us and through us.*

II. The second movement is a large fantasia on the old Lutheran chorale melody *Jesu meine Freude* (*Jesus my Joy*). The life of Christ is one powerful image of the high creative: being willing to be broken to receive the new; giving oneself up entirely so that a new

idea can be born. The old form of the organ prelude underlies this movement – new language out of the old.

III. The third movement is a music of praise and gratitude for all that is. It can be traced to the very end of the favorite old hymn tune *All Creatures of Our God and King* – the part with the joyous descending major scale where all the bells ring out. I recently used this tune for a set of variations in a piece called *Unending Stream of Life,* a name which could also be a fitting subtitle for this new symphony.

David Maslanka

David Maslanka was born in New Bedford, Massachusetts in 1943. He attended the Oberlin College Conservatory where he studied composition with Joseph Wood. He spent a year at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria, and did graduate work in composition at Michigan State University with H. Owen Reed. Maslanka's works for winds and percussion have become especially well known. They include among others, "A Child's Garden of Dreams" for Symphonic Wind Ensemble, "Concerto for Piano, Winds and Percussion," the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th symphonies, "Mass" for soloists, chorus, boys chorus, wind orchestra and organ, and the two Wind Quintets. Percussion works include, "Variations of 'Lost Love'" and "My Lady White: for solo marimba, and three ensemble works: "Arcadia II: Concerto for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble," "Crown of Thorns," and "Montana Music: Three Dances for Percussion." In addition, he has written a wide variety of chamber, orchestral, and choral pieces. David Maslanka's compositions are published by Carl Fischer, Inc., Kjos Music Company, Marimba Productions, Inc., the North American Saxophone Alliance, and OU Percussion Press, and have been recorded on Albany, Cambria, CRI, Mark, Novisse, and Klavier labels. He has served on the faculties of the State University of New York at Geneseo, Sarah Lawrence College, New York University, and Kingsborough College of the City University of New York. He now lives in Missoula, Montana. David Maslanka is a member of ASCAP.

Biographies

Gillian MacKay is an Associate Professor of Music of the University of Toronto, where she conducts the Wind Ensemble and teaches conducting and trumpet. She is also Associate Dean of Graduate Education. An award-winning teacher, Gillian has an active professional career as a trumpeter, conductor, adjudicator, and clinician. She has conducted honour bands throughout Canada and the United States, including the National Youth Band of Canada. Gillian MacKay has adjudicated Canadian band festivals at local, provincial, and national levels, as well as competitions in Singapore and Thailand.

Gillian MacKay has presented clinics and workshops at provincial and state conferences in Canada and the United States, and is known for her work on the relationship between conducting and mime. Also recognized as a conducting pedagogue, Gillian leads the University of Toronto Wind Conducting Symposium each July, and has been the guest instructor at other symposia in Canada. As a trumpeter, she has a particular interest in the French solo trumpet and cornet music of the 19th century.

Gillian holds degrees and diplomas from the University of Lethbridge, McGill University, the University of Calgary, and Northwestern University. Previously, she served as Instructor of Brass at Medicine Hat College, and Director of the School of Music at the University of Windsor.

Beverley Johnston is one of Canada's leading percussionists, performing, touring and broadcasting a wide array of compositions, both new and old. She is an accomplished orchestral and chamber musician, as well as an internationally celebrated solo touring artist, both in recital and with orchestra. Her exciting performances have been distinguished as non-conventional, effectively combining classical transcriptions, contemporary music and a touch of theatre.

She has released four solo albums: Impact (nominated for a JUNO award in 1987) and Alternate Currents for the Centrediscs label, Marimbach on CBC Records' Musica Viva label and just released her 4th solo recording called Garden Of Delights (available through her website).

Since the millennium, Ms. Johnston has been busy with concerto performances and recital programs across North America. Beverley Johnston studied at Vanier College in her native Montreal and at the University of Toronto where she now teaches.

University of Toronto Wind Ensemble

FLUTE
Tristan Durie
Yi Lin Huang
Brian Jiang (piccolo)
Jennifer Kowbell
Olivia Werden (piccolo)

OBOE
Eric Chow
Tze Yeung Ho

CLARINET
Hynjoo Choi
Jason Chum
Michael Dassios
Caitlin De Rosenroll (contra alto)
Charlene Lee (bass)
Jongmin Lee
Christa Lock (Eb)
Robin Soper (contrabass)
Katie Steadman (Eb)

BASSOON
Jeffrey Clements (contrabassoon)
Simeon Coibanu (contrabassoon)
Sheba Thibideau

SAXOPHONE
Spencer Brule
David Dai
Marc Funkenhauser, soprano solo
Scott Harbin
Jeffrey Leung
Shaun Mallinen

PERCUSSION
Bruce Chi
Jacob Mannion
Rafael Ponciano
Jonathan Smith
Kyle Reyes
Edna Teguibon

TRUMPET
Karin Anderson
Samara Desrochers
Rachel O'Connor
Benjamin Promane (piccolo)
Matthew Ross
Jacob Stief

HORN
Caitlin Coppell
Ben Coleman
Jennifer Fawcett
Chris Going
Ann Millen
Daniel Lock
Natalie Worden
Damir Pavelic

TROMBONE
Peter Bye
Tyler Cairns
Jordan Carter
George Liu (bass)
Elburz Sorkhabi

EUPHONIUM
Kohei Kamikawa
Brendan Rawlins
Cameron Rawlins

TUBA
James Brock
Stephen Vettese

PIANO
Wesley Shen

CONTRABASS
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